

# **Water Safety**

## **Rationale**

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This relates to water play, excursions, near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the environment. Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences.

The National Law (Section 167) requires that approved providers take reasonable care to protect children from harm, injury or illness. Extra diligence is required by educators to ensure children are closely supervised when they are near or around water.

Water use will be supervised to ensure the safety of children, staff and families is a priority. The hygienic state of the water will be assessed before it is used for children's play. Drinking water will be accessible for all children but hygienically stored and maintained.

Water play is a sensory experience that promotes learning and is fun for children. Water play promotes social skills such as turn taking and working together. Scientific and mathematical concepts, including volume and space are promoted during water experiences too.

## **Legislation and Government Requirements**

Federal and State Health and Occupational Safety & Health Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)

Education and Care Services National Regulations (Regulation 168)

There are many drowning hazards to be aware of including less obvious ones such as:

- Nappy buckets
- Washing machines
- Toilets
- Water features
- Water troughs

## Strategies for Implementation

1. Educators will ensure that water troughs are filled to a safe level.
2. These activities will be supervised at all times by adults. The educators supervising will ensure the water is hygienic and safe for use.
3. Children will be discouraged from drinking water during water play and good hygiene practices will be encouraged.
4. Water containers should be sealed and at the end of the day the container must be emptied and cleaned thoroughly.
5. Buckets used for general cleaning should be emptied after use and left in accessible to children in laundry area.
6. The service will ensure that water is at 43.5C and thermostatic mixing valves should be tested and serviced annually by a plumber.
7. Staff will drink hot drinks away from the children on their breaks
8. Excursions will not be near water
9. All outdoor areas will be checked for water and pools of water. Throughout the day yards will also be checked for safety before children play.
10. Outside water play can be provided if the temperature is above 26C.
11. Risk assessments will be undertaken when planning excursions or routine outings

## Sources

EECSRSB Water Safety Fact Sheet

Federal and State Health and Occupational Safety & Health Legislation

The Royal Life Saving Australia: Water Safety Tips

[www.kidsalive.com.au](http://www.kidsalive.com.au)

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